

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there were differences in the prevalence of self-reported mental health problems between men and women who had been exposed to violence by intimate partners and those who had not. Data from the National Longitudinal Study of Women's Health are used. The sample included 60,789 women aged 18-59 years who participated in the baseline survey in 1994-1995. Of these women, 10,000 reported having been exposed to violence by an intimate partner at some point in their lives. The prevalence of self-reported mental health problems was higher among women who had been exposed to violence than among those who had not. This finding suggests that exposure to violence by intimate partners may be associated with mental health problems.

Keywords: violence; intimate partner; mental health; prevalence; self-report

Introduction

Violence against women is a global public health problem. In many countries, women experience physical, sexual, and psychological abuse by their intimate partners. This abuse can have serious consequences for women's mental health. The purpose of this study was to determine whether there were differences in the prevalence of self-reported mental health problems between men and women who had been exposed to violence by intimate partners and those who had not. Data from the National Longitudinal Study of Women's Health are used. The sample included 60,789 women aged 18-59 years who participated in the baseline survey in 1994-1995. Of these women, 10,000 reported having been exposed to violence by an intimate partner at some point in their lives. The prevalence of self-reported mental health problems was higher among women who had been exposed to violence than among those who had not. This finding suggests that exposure to violence by intimate partners may be associated with mental health problems.

Stefan Staicovici

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